

Hotel Business[®]

July/August 2014

DESIGN

The Business of Hospitality Style[®]

Creating Harmony

**STREAMSONG RESORT TAKES
NOTES FROM NATURE**

**Luxury Designs
FROM BEVERLY HILLS TO SINGAPORE**

**MAKING A SPLASH
lagoon or pool? you decide**



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Perfect Pitch
 Streamsong Resort is
 in tune with nature

Q&A

Beatrice Girelli, Indidesign



Departments

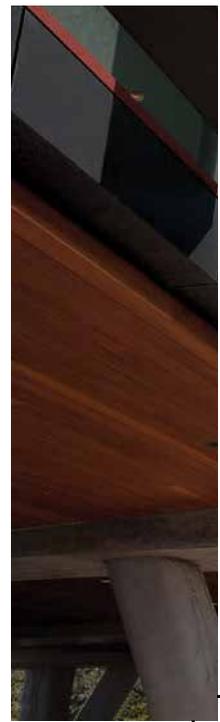
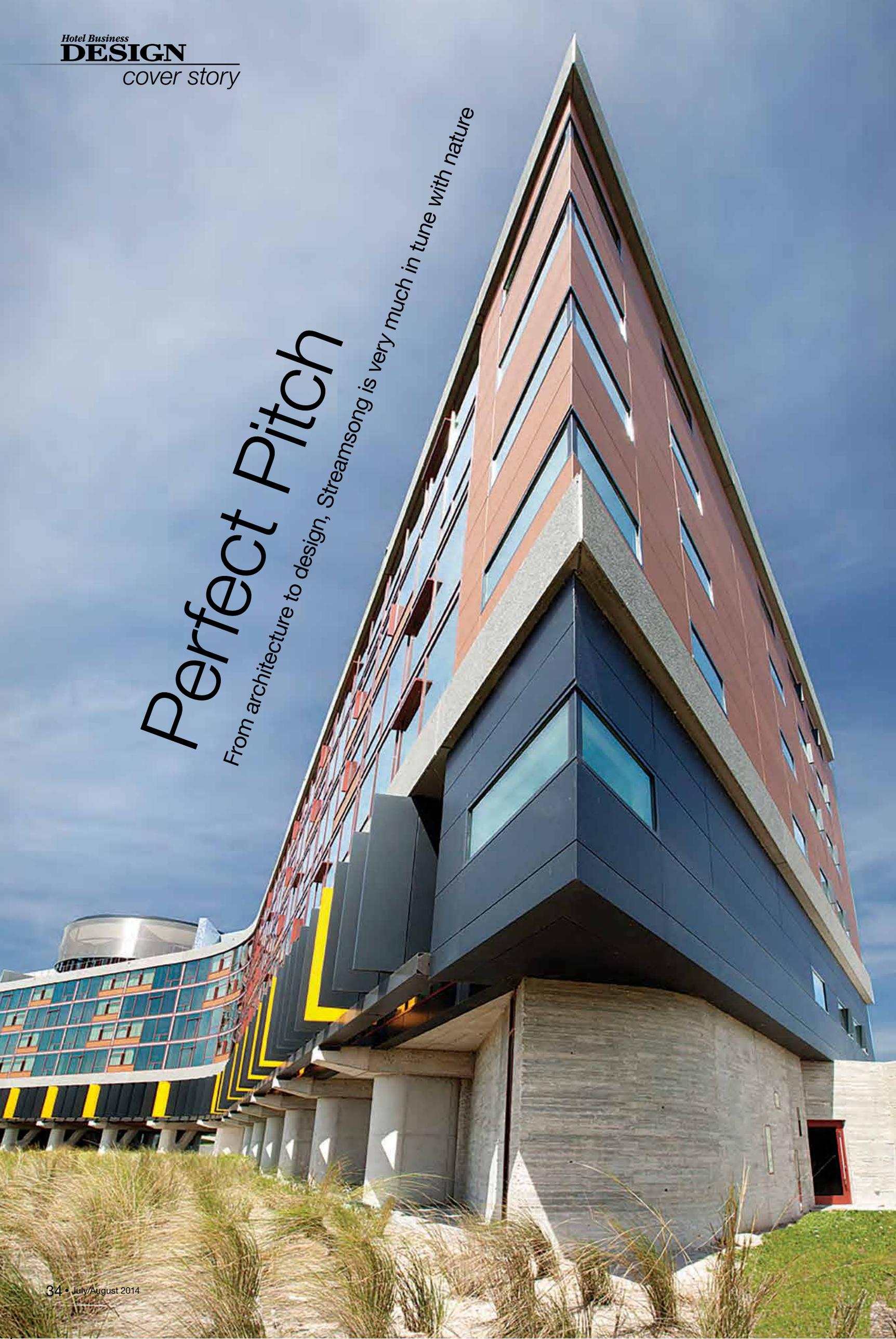
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Pool Design



Perfect Pitch

From architecture to design, Streamsong is very much in tune with nature





The Bank, the next level, includes the public spaces and main lobby. The Leaf lobby contains reclaimed materials to capture the land's flora and has a ribbed ceiling, designed to suggest veined leaves.

The next level, Canopy, is the private space comprised of 216 guestrooms and suites. Design elements include custom components like the floor-to-ceiling walnut louvers, light fixtures, couches and carpets. As a nod to the resort's location, each room has cabinetry that can fit 10 books, primarily written by Southern authors. *A Land Remembered*, a history of the settlement of Florida, sits in a separate niche.

The last section is Sky, the patio and roof lounge. It is named Fragmentary Blue, based on the Robert Frost poem. The lounge was designed to both open up guests to the night sky and protect them from the Florida heat. Alfonso added a protective light scrim of stainless steel over the square, glass lounge to diffuse light. By combining geometries, he was able to achieve an unencumbered 360-degree view of the horizon. An oculus has been carved into the lounge ceiling, aimed to acknowledge both the heavens and the light, according to the firm.

"The design could represent a cross-section of the site, with roots below the surface, the lake's edge above and tree canopy in the sky," Alfonso explained. "The lodge's rooms become the canopy, and the rooftop embraces the horizons and the clear night sky. The building is organized with the spa underground, and the Bank became the public concourse, with the rooms stacking above. The land gave me a strategy for moving forward in a rational way."

The history, geology, foliage and sky influenced material palettes and textures as well. Limestone, cedar, cherry, teak and walnut were used as warm,

natural extensions of the land, as were handcrafted mosaics and Venetian plaster. "The majority of the palette is concrete, wood, plaster, steel and glass," said Alfonso. "We tried to be tactile and warm with the scheme as opposed to an urban proposition. The resort attempts to nestle into the landscape yet still retains a 'man-made object' quality."

The 16,000-acre property includes a 316,000-sq.-ft. lodge, 42,000-sq.-ft. golf clubhouse, three restaurants, a spa and a conference center. Alfonso was responsible for the entire design of the property, from the two buildings to the custom lighting, furnishings, spa products, staff uniforms and signage. "Mosaic not being a traditional hospitality developer opened up great opportunities to expand our reach and vision," he said. "There was a tremendous amount of trust built. It was a very collaborative team, a seamless architect-client relationship. They really became comfortable with the idea of a singular vision from a singular designer. So we had a clear design roadmap established, and there really wasn't anything we could not take on and agree upon with the client."

Alfonso noted that there is a lot that defines this resort as a luxury property. "The amenity program is a differentiator with the first-tier golf program, the spa, the bass fishing, the shooting sports. The F&B program is top shelf. I would also acknowledge Mosaic's commitment to pushing the architecture and design as a priority, and this seems to always be part of the conversation," he said. And, of course, luxury is often in the details. "We really enjoyed the process of customizing the uniforms with Mosaic, and Cintas was amazing. The uniforms logically fell into the design parameters of each space. The spa products were created using a chemist from

Colorado and the Alfonso/Mosaic team doing a lot of trial and error until it felt like *Streamsong*."

In addition, Alfonso, an exhibiting artist, was responsible for the art program, and he created a series of abstract paintings, murals, engravings and sculptures. "I always wanted guests to feel like their individual rooms were different, a custom touch," he explained. "So we broke the rooms down into four seasons, and the paintings and photography responded to each. This allowed me to customize the color schemes, and the paintings had a rationale in the colors and textures. Too many hospitality projects do not pay attention to the art in the room, as it is usually at the end when the budget is strained. But it can be what the guest remembers."

Alfonso noted that, as there is with any project, there were challenges. "As always, the budget and the desire for innovation and excellence are always at odds. We had to recalibrate throughout the project, but we are hopefully the only ones that know where," he said, adding the remoteness of the site caused a strain, as the team had to construct the infrastructure, such as water treatment, power and roads, from scratch.

"I would hope that the visitor would feel a consistent design DNA throughout the entirety of the project," said Alfonso. "I see the hotel as a singular work with diverse program pieces held together with those [design principles]. We tried to put an equal energy of design resolution throughout."

Alfonso noted that everyone involved felt proud upon completion. "When you work for five years on a project, you hope that it was worth the struggle. You know it went well when both client and architect are sad that it's over," he concluded.





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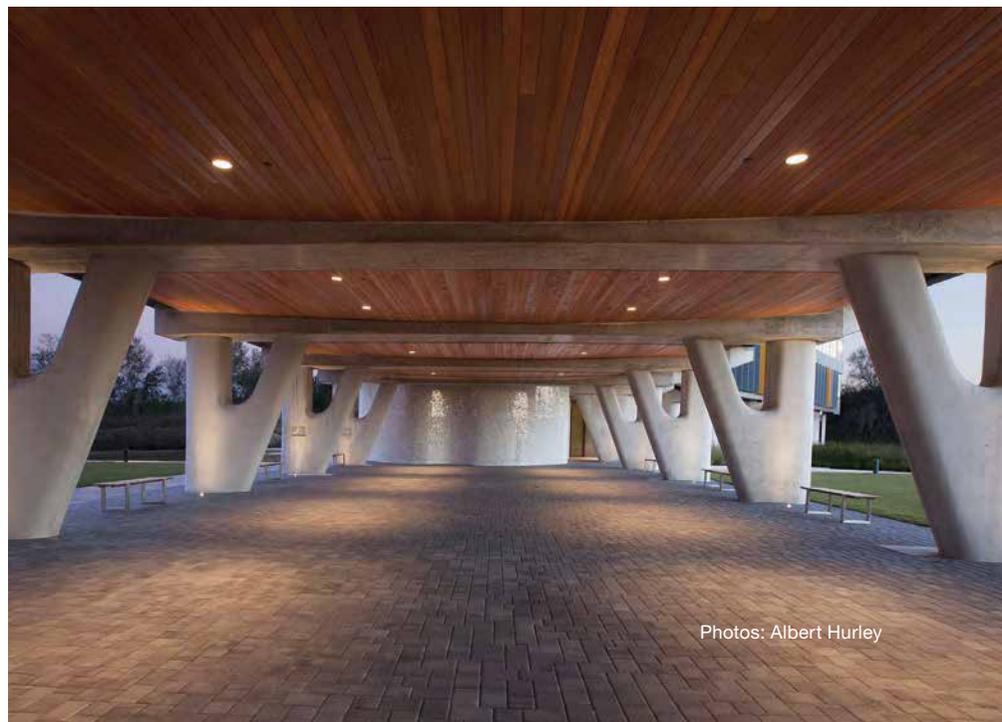
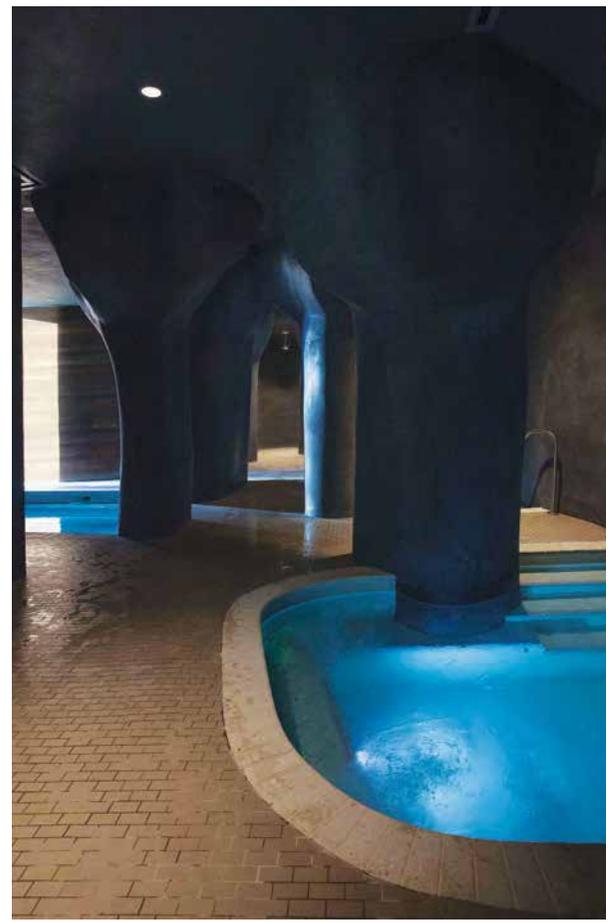
By NICOLE CARINO

hen you think of Florida, it's easy to picture busy theme parks and the bright, neon palette of Miami. But the Streamsong Resort, located in Polk County, FL, wanted to build upon the state's natural beauty.

"There are places left in Florida where you can still get a glimpse of what the raw beauty of our state looks like. It is a place to completely unplug from civilization. The land, it all started there," explained Alberto Alfonso, AIA, a founding principal and president of Alfonso Architects.

Located in Bone Valley, the luxury resort is situated on a formerly mined phosphate land owned and developed by The Mosaic Company. Alfonso named the history of the land, the phosphate deposits and the mining as inspiration for the resort. "Then there was the remoteness, the scale of it: the big sky, the horizon-to-horizon reach," he said. "So the building inspiration attempts to respond both metaphorically and functionally to land and history."

To do this, Alfonso designed a vertical building strategy for the lodge grounded in the pre-historic terrain that consists of four zones. Submersion includes the spa—AcquaPietra—the breezeway and fine-dining restaurant Sotto Terra, and massive, concrete, "petrified" tree columns are featured in all three spaces. The 7,000-sq.-ft. grotto spa offers seven intertwining therapeutic pools. According to the designer, the breezeway captures the east/west gentle winds and provides shaded passage to escape heat and rain. The columns function as dividers in the formal restaurant, separating lounging and dining. Alfonso noted that the breezeway was a "great surprise space, as you really feel a coolness and a sense of shelter from the heat. The spa also took some design chances with the black, free-form concrete columns in the pools make for a very unique atmosphere."



Photos: Albert Hurley